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27th January 2015

Sir

Further to my recent letter to the editor putting the record straight on TTIP, it seems that People's NHS is intent mounting a local campaign that preys on people's concerns rather than participating in a grown up and factual debate about the NHS. The recent spread of signage being erected this week in the Farncombe area which accuses this government of privatising the NHS is scaremongering at its worst and therefore I feel the need to further respond via this newspaper for the benefit of your readers.

Only 6% of NHS funding is spent outsourcing work to the private sector services, and the growth of such outsourcing is half what it was under the previous government. Decisions are made by the local GP groups responsible for health budgets and not by ministers which is a deliberate check designed to ensure that benefits to patients rather than political ideology is the determining factor. TTIP is a potential free trade agreement between the EU and the United States, and the lead EU negotiator has confirmed it will have no impact on decisions about whether or not health spending is outsourced to the private sector. To suggest otherwise plays of people's fears in a way that is totally irresponsible and seeks to turn the NHS into a political football which it should not be.

I should add, however, that I do support the last government's policy of using the independent sector to reduce waiting times for hip and knee operations, something that has benefited many hundreds of my constituents.

Jeremy Hunt

RT Hon Jeremy Hunt
Member of Parliament for South West Surrey